

# John Day-Snake Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)/Forest Service (FS)

Tamastlikt Cultural Institute Multi-Purpose Room

Pendleton, Oregon

December 2, 2003

Facilitator: Debbie Lyons

Notetaker: Peggy Diegan

| RAC Member                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Group | Federal Officials                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Adriane Borgias*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 1     | Dave Henderson, DFO, Vale BLM       |
| Steve Courtney                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1     | Tina Welch, Prineville BLM          |
| Art Waugh                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1     | Jeff Blackwood, Umatilla NF         |
| Dan Fouts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2     | Roger Williams, Malheur NF          |
| Joseph Jones                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2     | Penny Dunn-Woods, BLM-Baker City RA |
| Shirley Muse                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2     |                                     |
| David Riley                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 2     |                                     |
| Berta Youtie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2     | Guests                              |
| Robert Brunoe                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 3     | Tom Seley, Burns BLM WH/B           |
| Michael Hayward                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3     | Laura Bell, PAO, USFS, Portland     |
| Tim Keith                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 3     | Rick Golden, NOAA, Portland         |
| Timothy Stearns                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3     | Eugene Skrine, USFS, Portland       |
| John Tanaka                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 3     |                                     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |       |                                     |
| Absent Members                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |       | Absent Federal Officials            |
| Terry Drever-Gee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 1     | Karyn Wood, Wallowa Whitman NF      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |       | Larry Timchak, Ochoco NF            |
| <i>* Made arrangements in advance to be available by telephone to complete the quorum required to approve issues voted on by the Resource Advisory Council. Debbie Lyons contacted her twice to obtain her vote on items indicated with "**".</i> |       |                                     |

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## AGENDA REVIEW

Debbie Lyons-Facilitator/Public Affairs Vale BLM /John Tanaka-RAC Chair

## INTRODUCTIONS

Dave Henderson-Designated Federal Official (DFO), Vale BLM District Manager

## REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES

Debbie Lyons

- Minutes dated May 15, 2002, should be dated May 15, 2003. Manford Isley was present, not absent from the meeting.
- **Berta Youtie moved, Tim Keith seconded, that the minutes be approved as corrected-motion passed\*.**

- Clarifications/corrections on the minutes dated September 22-23, 2002 - Minutes should be dated September 22-23, 2003. The minutes began "A quorum was not present"; however, the attendance roster seemed to contradict that statement by listing sufficient attendance for a quorum. A quorum was not present at the meeting because some of the listed attendees were outgoing or incoming members who were there in a volunteer capacity since member confirmations had not yet been received. The minutes should be changed to clarify this point.
- **Mike Hayward moved and Berta Youtie seconded that the JD-SRAC minutes from September 22-23, 2003 (Kahneeta) be approved as corrected—motion passed\*.**

## **ANNUAL WORK PLAN (AWP) and Measures of Accomplishment** ***(Discussed FACA measures of accomplishment)***

### **Debbie Lyons**

- Handout-Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) database document shows the type of work measures being collected under FACA.
  - There are new reporting requirements on tracking measures of accomplishments for the RAC's.
    - BLM is required to use this database to capture RAC accomplishments and savings
    - To avoid capturing all data at the end of the year, we will track accomplishments as they are documented in the minutes. When decisions are implemented, or savings are achieved, we will document the savings and other areas tracked within the data base. The summary of accomplishments will be reviewed and commented on at the last meeting of the fiscal year.
    - There was discussion on whether cost savings were appropriate to track for RAC recommendations. It was noted that they do not always apply and that there are other categories where benefits are realized. Dave Henderson gave the example of Vale District's Birch Creek Plan that was completed by the Southeast OR RAC Subcommittee and there was a cost savings to the government because BLM employees did not have to spend time doing this.

### ***(Reviewed Annual Work Plan)***

- There was a discussion on the last item, Hells Canyon Subgroup. As written, it states "Confirm with Wallowa-Whitman NF Supervisor Karyn Wood whether to continue with this subgroup. Karen Wood was not present.
  - **Mike Hayward** - Hells Canyon Subgroup had a meeting, and out of 18 members, only 4 showed up.
  - Karyn Wood has assigned Kendall Clark, the manager of the Hells Canyon, to work with the Subgroup.
    - The committee is in a holding pattern until the committee reorganizes.
  - This Subgroup could be proposed as a separate RAC because of the long-term commitment.

- Funding is a question since the Forest Service does not have dollars to support group.
- Discussion continued on whether the Annual Work Plan would be "set in stone" when approved, or whether it would become a working document.
  - AWP focuses on what we want to focus on with the agendas throughout the year.
  - The roundtable would be a place to bring up new items.
  - Prior to each meeting members should send John Tanaka any emerging issues that need to be included on the agenda.
  - Each agenda becomes its own priority setting exercise.

**DECISION: Under "Important Issues" in the draft AWP, the following statement should be added: "This work plan is subject to revision as issues and changing priorities occur throughout the year."**

**Joseph Jones moved and Steve Courtney seconded that the draft AWP be approved as the final AWP with the addition noted above. Motion passed\***

- When subcommittees do their updates they need to let everyone know who the members are and new members need to indicate if they are interested in joining a subcommittee.

#### **SUSTAINING WORKING LANDSCAPES (*Update on regulations/EIS/policy*)** **Dave Henderson**

- BLM received the RACs' comments, and there were some surprises. They are currently reviewing the information received.
- The question that rose during the previous meeting's conference call about the removal of Reserve Common Allotments applied to the proposed regulatory changes, not the policy portion that the RAC had commented on. Those comments were welcome.
- The proposed rule (regulatory portion of SWL) will be out in early December for comment.
  - Proof reading is currently being done.
  - Will get out to the RAC's as soon as possible.

#### **WILD HORSE & BURRO PROGRAM UPDATE** **Tom Seley, Burns BLM**

- Pivotal program-adoption demand is down nationally.
- Current issue is being worked on at Washington Office (WO) and dollars are being reprogrammed from current funding that can be used to obtain targets by 2005.
- 12.8 million additional dollars are being requested.
  - **Dave Henderson**- "Reprogrammed" means dollars will be taken out of other programs to fund this.
    - Does not always go over well when this happens.
    - This will be a "permanent" reprogramming, not one-time only

- If reprogrammed dollars are not received, targets will probably not be met.
  - Will not know until January if the program gets additional dollars.
  - With fewer dollars, the program will continue, but to what level?
  - Last year's OR/WA budget was \$800,000, and if additional funding is not received, we expect the same dollar amount this year.
- New horse holding facility here and it should be filled up by the first of the year.
- 183 wild horses have been gathered to date this year.
  - Burns facility has 64 head now.
- During the Kiger gather, the helicopter crashed and only 111 horses were captured prior to that.
  - Horses were difficult to gather after this first gather and only an additional 49 head were gathered.
- There will not be any further gathers this year unless we receive the reprogrammed dollars.
  - Exception will be a small gather near Prineville, plus some monitoring and emergency gathers.
- 8-10 promotional horses will be available for fairs and events this year.
- A couple of Kiger horses will be displayed at the High Desert Museum near Bend.
- **Roger Williams, Forest Supervisor Malheur National Forest**-Malheur National Forest has 250 horses, but should only have about 100 in the area.
  - Expect to have a gather this year through an Interagency agreement.
  - National agreement has been prepared and the decision was to not sign this agreement at the national level but back at the local levels.
  - Would like to have a gather of approximately 140 horses this year, but currently not allowed to put these horses up for adoptions.
    - **Dave Henderson**-Concerned that the Forest Service horses must be programed into the BLM pipeline up front.

### **Tom Seley**

- Everything done has to go through a full planning process and depending on what comes from this with the different organizations, such as environmental.
- 6000 animals per year are in the adoption pipeline.
- Lakeview, Burns, and Vale have high horse population numbers and Prineville is trying to lower their numbers.
- In Oregon the condition of horses is being compared with other states such as Nevada and Utah.
  - There is concern that the WO folks do not see our horse and range conditions as being as critical as other states.
- There are approximately 9 long term holding facilities and not all of the horses in these facilities are adoptable.
  - It costs approx \$1.50 per day per animal in a holding facility.

**DECISION:** Schedule a more detailed Wild Horse & Burro presentation/discussion on the next meeting agenda. Areas suggested for inclusion: RAC's role and opportunities with the WH&B Program; process for priority setting horse removal on HMA's; costs; potential changes to law, political issues.

**ASSIGNMENT:** E-mail Debbie Lyons ([Debra\\_Lyons@or.blm.gov](mailto:Debra_Lyons@or.blm.gov)) by the end of January 2004 with Wild Horse and Burro Program issues you would like to see specifically addressed at the next RAC meeting

## **SUBBASIN REVIEWS**

**Penny Woods, Vale District BLM, Baker Resource Area Manager**

- Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPCC) Fish and Wildlife programs to protect and enhance environment for electrical power.
  - Visit website [www.nwpcc.org/](http://www.nwpcc.org/)
- Reorganized program on science and policy.
- Set stage for 62 sub basin reviews on the Snake and Columbia Rivers..
- Wants to get Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) funding and implementation.
- There is a role for a scientific review panel.
- Allows proposals to be made that are driven by communities through the local Water Shed Councils that identify fish habitat and establish strategies.
- NOAA fisheries intend to use the inventory and management plan information as a part of their recovery plan.
- Community funding provided from the NWPCC.
  - Need to create Sub basin plans for;
    - Grande Ronde, Burns, Powder, Owyhee, John Day, and the Deschutes.
    - To provide hard data for the plans, temporary employees and specialists can provide professional judgment on threatened and endangered fisheries, winter deer habitat, and riparian zones.
    - All of the plans are due by the end of May.
    - There is a group on the John Day that is leading this very complex process.
    - Will be interesting to see what comes out from these plans, because each group is going about gathering data and compiling data in individual ways.
  - **Jeff Blackwood, Forest Supervisor Umatilla National Forest-** looks at this effort as informational only and not as needing a decision-could need further clarification.
    - Forest Plans have been given flexibility to develop what fits the geographic area.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**OHV**

- Chair is Adriane Borgias with members Shirley Muse, Tim Stearns, and Art Waugh-report at next meeting.

### **Noxious Weeds**

- Chair is John Tanaka with members Berta Youtie, Shirley Muse, Terry Drever-Gee, and Dan Fouts.
- Set up to wait on the release of two Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) that are coming out for the BLM and Forest Service weeds program.
- **Jeff Blackwood** suggests that the subcommittee have another discussion on how to react to the EIS's.

### **Planning**

- Terry Drever-Gee, Steve Courtney, Mike Hayward, Tim Keith, and Shirley Muse—need to ask Terry if she is interested in chairing this group.
  - Group needs to work on whatever the National Forests and BLM are currently working on.

### **Sage Grouse**

- Chair is Berta Youtie with members John Tanaka, Joseph Jones, and Dan Fouts.
  - RAC sent a letter (see handouts). What is the next step?

**ASSIGNMENT:** *Dave Henderson to find out the status of the letter sent to the State Director then he will report back to the Sage Grouse committee members.*

### **REGION 6 INVASIVE SPECIES EIS (Draft due out after holidays - requesting early RAC involvement) see handout**

#### **Gene Skrine**

- **Jeff Blackwood** introduced Laura Bell, Team Public Affairs Official (PAO)-Portland, Rick Golden, hired to work between the agencies, NOAA-Portland and Gene Skrine-USFS
  - Overview of a draft EIS.
  - Map shows a 12% per year weed invasion.
  - Released as a guide on how it will be.
- **Roger Williams** - Malheur NF decision also flavored the approach.
  - Malheur NF failed to address prevention and new information.
- Purpose of the document was to treat known sites.
- Decision that a Regional Forester made – see handout.
- **Dave Henderson**, the Federal Executive Order recognizes non native and invasive species.
- OHV is an important issue with invasive weeds.
- Herbicides are the minimum tool rule when we need to use a stronger tool we will use it.
  - 10 herbicides are in the planning document and there are only 4 available.

- Don't have a mechanism to incorporate new herbicides as they come out.
    - Would have liked to have this included, but may have delayed the process.
- New Prevention brochures created by Laura Bell are going to come out soon.
- Region 6 would like to have RAC involvement.
  - Wait until the draft is out then be specific about what the RAC would like done.
  - Tribes will be given document 10 days prior to public release.
  - Mt Hood, La Grande, Bend, and Lakeview for meetings.
  - Website will have draft and information posted.
    - [www.fs.fed.us/r6/invasiveplant-eis](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/invasiveplant-eis) is the website for the Invasive Plant Environmental Impact Statement.
  - Will have CD's available.
  - Invasive Plant EIS Team USDA Forest Service Email: [r6\\_IPEIS@fs.fed.us](mailto:r6_IPEIS@fs.fed.us)
  - E-mail Laura Bell [Lbell@fs.fed.us](mailto:Lbell@fs.fed.us) to receive a hard copy of this 1000 page draft document.
- Suggestion to put pictures on the website and/or have a weed pulling day for the public.
- **Jeff Blackwood**-the decisions that come out are at the Regional level and will tier out to the other FS folks.
  - Blue Mountain has a lot of diversity and the FS is rethinking doing a blanket EIS.
    - Three Forests have gotten together to figure out what they can do together or not and answer the question is National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) already completed?
  - Would like the RAC put into the early notification.
  - Review of the guide would be good to allow folks to go to the areas they are interested in seeing.
- Send Rick Golden an e-mail with any concerns associated with the plan. [rick.golden@noaa.gov](mailto:rick.golden@noaa.gov)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD-no public showed up**

### **FOREST PLAN REVISION**

#### **Jeff Blackwood**

- The Blue Mountain Planning Team is a diverse group from all over the country.
  - The Team is looking at the current management situation.
  - The three forest plans were signed in 1990 and they were all a little different.
    - The team is focusing on what these plans currently look like and what needs to change.
  - FS makes big EIS's and to eliminate jumping into the process early, we are currently evaluating what needs to be changed before defining the NEPA process.

- The first of the year the planning team will be studying this plan and determine what role the RAC can have on the process.
- May need to form a larger subcommittee to deal with this as it may take 3 years to complete the process.
  - External subcommittee may be needed.
- Both the John Day/Snake and the Southeast Oregon RAC will need to be involved in this plan.
- Forest Service planning keys off of the regulations and there have been several attempts to update these regulations.
  - Currently not sure which regulations to tier off.
  - Looking at all options to develop integrated plans that can be updated every 10-15 years.
  - Not starting from scratch, need to make revisions to the 1990 plan.
  - Team needs to look at what is working, what is not working, and what needs changed.
  - Interagency Memo of Understanding (MOU) to incorporate the Interior Columbia Basis Ecosystem Management Project (ICEBEMP) information into future plans.
  - Formulating the alternative plans is important.
  - Three Blue Mountain Forests (Umatilla, Malheur, and Wallowa-Whitman) plus the Ochoco National Forest will be involved in this plan.

## **BLUE MOUNTAIN LAND EXCHANGE**

### **Jeff Blackwood**

- Funding is currently not available, still hoping to have a draft EIS out in January with a couple of alternatives; no action or a modified alternative with adjustments.
- 24 private land owners and 3 NF involved in exchange.
- Areas of concerns and issues are with the Umatilla Tribes concerning riparian areas with public ownership that needs to allow access to tribal gathering areas.
- Original owner of a large ranch passed away and his heirs are interested in keeping as a working ranch.
- Draft scheduled to be out in May.

## **MUSEUM TOUR**

- Guided Tamastlikt Museum tour for the whole group

## **ELECTION OF RAC CHAIRPERSON**

### **Debbie Lyons**

- Mike Hayward nominated John Tanaka as Chair and Terry Drever-Gee as Vice Chair.
- Shirley Muse nominated Berta Youtie as Vice Chair.
- **Berta Youtie seconded John Tanaka nomination as Chair and motion passed\*.**



- No one seconded Terry Drever-Gee nomination as Vice Chair.
- **Mike Hayward seconded Berta Youtie's nomination for Vice Chair and motion passed\*.**

## **2004 MEETING SCHEDULE**

### **Debbie Lyons**

- **April 22, 2004** in Pendleton (Noxious Weeds Subcommittee Meeting on the afternoon of the 21st and RAC meeting on the 22nd). Jeff Blackwood can provide meeting space for subcommittee. Invasive Weeds EIS to be included in RAC agenda.
- **June 22-23, 2004** in Baker. Stewardship fieldtrip to be included.
- **September 14-15, 2004** in John Day. Roger Williams can help with location and logistics.
- **December 2, 2004** in Pendleton. Agenda should include charter review.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

### **Bobbie Brunoe**

- Busy time implementing re-licensing efforts.
- Fuel reduction program at Warm Springs.
- Lots of big projects with fall Chinook.

### **Tim Keith**

- Oregon Department of Forestry fire season is over.
- The Department has some unfilled positions.
- Agency is combining into a stewardship program.

### **Joseph Jones-email handouts**

- Opportunity to focus on ways to enhance water in the west with Department of Interior (DOI).
  - Through conservation and use.
  - Need an inventory of the water uses.
  - Potential to do a remote sensing project to inventory the water enhancement in the west and get a biological return out of this.
  - Stream system hydrologist makes estimates on the potential to bring up spring levels and late season flows, etc.
  - See what happens when you get the forest thinned out and allow the precipitation to reach the ground.
  - Grasslands would also improve.
- Proposal suggested to the Secretary of the Interior and Director of BLM and FS needs to use the earmarked dollars already planned to fund project.
- Need to better match our mission and direction.
- Questions that need answered-what is the realistic recovery if the managers had the resources and the time?
- **Adrian Borgias**-Per Debbie's phone call
  - How does this fit with the mission of the RAC and is this appropriate to pursue or not?

- **John Tanaka**-are we advising the BLM?
- **Dave Henderson**-we need to tie this back to some need on the BLM/FS land and develop the request on specific needs and this would make it easier to carry on to the directors at the Washington Office.
  - Needs information on what the FS is planning on a specific project and what would be done with the data.

***Suggestion-Joseph Jones will modify the document based on comments and mail to the whole RAC to let everyone read over the document and then e-mail comments back to Joseph and he will edit for whole RAC review until either the RAC decides not to pursue or it's refined to the RAC's specifications. Need to tie project to Forest Service/BLM.***

#### **Dan Fouts**

- Wanted to thank Dave Henderson for getting the sheet updated on the Big Summit HMA.

#### **Steve Courtney**

- Big issue trying to keep wood in the local sawmills since the county is flush with sawmills.
  - The problem is that the local sawmills are either out of logs or do not have full decks of logs and sometime this winter there will be hard times to the local sawmills because of no backload of logs.

#### **Art Waugh**

- Just trying to keep the lines of communication open and keeping watch on any changes coming up.

#### **Dave Riley**

- Bulk of dispersed recreation does not have a particular organization and this meeting with all the topics has been fascinating.
- He is new to the RAC is on a learning curve.

#### **Penny Woods**

- The Frasier Stewardship contract with a local organization will start work in June.
- Successful with restoration on the Grande Ronde River and have issued an Environmental Assessment (EA) with this restoration that included planting, seeding, and culvert replacing, etc.
  - Competed for and received funding to complete project.
- Received \$250,000 dollars to upgrade 4 recreation sites on the Snake River.

#### **Berta Youtie**

- Juniper group got a grant from the FS to put together a plan on the use of juniper.
  - Logging on sites to measure what good is going to come out of this.

- Warm Springs should benefit from this grant.

### **Tina Welch**

- If dollars are reprogrammed into the Wild Horse program, the Noxious Weeds Program may be reduced to fund the reprogramming.
- Prineville District is moving ahead with posting Rangeland Health Assessments for allotments on their website.
- Little Canyon Mountain Project near Canyon City has a lot of insect infestation and fuels and a timber sale is scheduled to begin next Friday as a first step in restoration of the area.

### **Mike Hayward**

- As the FS budgets plummet, not sure much work is going to be done on the ground.
  - Has to be in our mind all the time to push issues either as individuals or as a RAC.

### **Roger Williams**

- Forest is focused on fire recovery salvage projects.
- Recovery issues-3 EIS's with a fourth completed last year on Forest Health issues.
- Forest was working on 5 grazing allotments when dollars were cut.
- Trying to get timber sale program going to give the local industry some hope.
- Grazing program 100+ allotments that need to have their Management Plans updated.
- Completed vegetation layer that goes with Forest Plan on fuels and watershed condition to try to get some things done on the ground to help the local economy.
- Trying to put operational plans together.
- Contracting NEPA analysis for fuels treatment and timber sales.
  - This has been the most challenging assignment he has ever had.

### **John Tanaka**

- Research Station plans to hire two new scientists.
- Working with economic impact models for Union, Wallowa and Baker Counties.
- Would like the RAC members to purchase a fish (\$100 donation) that would be posted in the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute.

### **Dave Henderson**

- New member orientation was done by Peggy and Debbie and the book is a start and we are by no means there.
  - What he would like is by the next meeting have feedback on what would add to the orientation that would improve and make it easier for new folks.

- More information on the history of John Day/Snake RAC's accomplishments to be researched by Peggy Diegan and added to the book at a later time.
- Proposed meeting with new members by Chair and DFO the night before their 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.